

30 May, 1983

ECØ34B

President
Casa Rosada
Balcarce 50.
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dear Mr. President:

I am greatly concerned about two imprisoned Argentines:
Emilia Gelstein, in Villa Devoto Prison, and her husband
Isidoro Gelstein, in Rawson Prison.

Emilia Gelstein, who was detained with her husband in October 1975, was professionally concerned with medical research and treatment and education. According to my information, at the time of her arrest she had no interest in politics and no time for politics. Her husband Isidoro was a journalist specializing in tourism. I have no knowledge of any political activities of his. In 1980, five years after their arrest, the Gelsteins were given twelve-year prison sentences which will be completed in 1987. I do not know what charges the Gelsteins were convicted of.

What were these charges? Why are the Gelsteins imprisoned?

I urge you to use your influence and authority to have this matter of the Gelsteins investigated, and to have both Gelsteins released. I urge this in the spirit of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

The case of the Gelsteins is but one instance, out of thousands which cause concern around the world, of apparent violation of human rights in Argentina. What can be done? I was happy to learn that there have been some recent signs of improvement, in that during the past six months many political prisoners have been freed and the Argentine government has been investigating and reporting on many cases of past abuses of human rights. I fervently hope that such changes will continue, and that the improvement will become much greater -- so that the Gelsteins and others will be relieved of undeserved suffering, so that Argentines can turn their energies to the kind of creative productive work much needed by Argentina and the world, and so that Argentina will win the respect and admiration of the free world.

Yours sincerely,

Edith Halbert

Edith Halbert
(Mrs. Melvyn Halbert)

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
() Release ☒ Excise () Deny
Exemption(s): 66
Declassify: () In Part () In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade
Date Declassify on Reason:

cc: Argentine Embassy
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance
Senator Howard Baker; Senator James Sasser
Bureau of Human Rights, Latin American Dept., Dept. of State, U.S.